

**REMARKS**

Claims 38 and 55 have been amended and Claims 28-59 are pending and under consideration. No new matter is presented in this Amendment.

In the Office Action, the Examiner sets forth a Restriction Requirement among four (4) groups of the claims.

**Group I:** Claims 29-37, drawn to an apparatus;

**Group II:** Claims 38-47, drawn to a method;

**Group III:** Claims 48-54, drawn to an apparatus; and

**Group IV:** Claims 55-59, drawn to a method.

Although Claim 28 was not mentioned in the restriction requirement, Applicants hereby elect *with traverse* the claims of Group I (Claims 29-37), which are drawn to an apparatus for perforating a tobacco rod prior to assembly of the tobacco rod to a filter rod via tipping paper. Claims 28, 38, 48 and 55 depend from Claim 29. As such, all remaining claims (Claims 28-59) are now directed to the elected invention.

Early and favorable consideration on the merits is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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